

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 209293

FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT BRAZZAVILLE 1161 ACTION SECSTATE INFO PARIS  
KINSHASA LIBREVILLE YAOUNDE DAED AUG 17:

QTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L BRZZAVILLE 1161

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, CF  
SUBJECT: ALLEGED COUP ATTEMPT

REF: BRAZZAVILLE 1149 AND PREVIOUS

1. WE UNDERSTAND THAT TIP-OFF ON ALLEGED COUP ATTEMPT  
CAME SHORTLY AFTER MID-DAY AUGUST 12, WHEN ACCUSED PLOTTER PATRICE  
FINA MATSIONA ARRIVED IN OFFICE OF MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OBENGA,  
ARMED TO THE TEETH. MINISTRY WAS OTHERWISE EMPTY, BUT  
PRESIDENTIAL DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR, FRANCOIS ITOUA, WHO WAS  
WITH OBENGA, HAD SEEN THROUGH WINDOW FINA'S MERCEDES PULL  
UP, AND FINA ARRIVE, "IN A SUSPICIOUS MANNER." THIS LED  
ITOUA TO WARN OBENGA WHO, IN TURN, HAD ALERTED SECURITY,  
WHO THEN SEIZED FINA IN OBENGA'S OFFICE. THEREAFTER, FINA  
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REPORTEDLY BLURTED OUT SUBSTANCE OF COUP PLAN, INCLUDING  
INFORMATION TO EFFECT THAT OBENGA'S DEATH WAS TO BE FOLLOWED  
IN QUICK SUCCESSION BY MURDER OF OTHER NORTHERNERS, INCLUDING  
RESIDENTIAL POLITICAL ADVISOR EKONDY, MILITARY COMMITTEE MEMBER  
ANGA, AND PRESIDENT. SEUCURITY THEN MOVED TO ARREST OTHER ACCUSED,  
(ALSO LARIS) FELIX MOUZABAKANI, BERNARD KOLELA, AND  
DIEUDONNE MIAKASSISSA--ALL SAID TO BE HELD AND STILL ALIVE.

2. RUMORS OF A SOUTHERN PUTSCH HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING FOR MONTHS (BRAZZAVILLE 885) AND, GIVEN A CONGOLESE PENCHANT FOR MARKING ANNIVERSAIRES BY COUP ATTEMPTS, TIMING ON THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE "CONGOLESE REVOLUTION" (WHICH OCCURRED ITSELF ON THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE) DOES NOT STRIKE US AS UNUSUAL. KOLELA HAD BEEN A LONG-TIME OPPONENT OF SOCIALISM, AND TAPES OF HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS ALONG THOSE LINES-- OF YEARS AGO--NOW ARE BEING PLAYED ON BRAZZAVILLE RADIO AS "EVIDENCE" OF HIS COMPLICITY. MIAKASSISSA WAS PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY UNDER NGOUABI. MORE RECENTLY, HE WORKED IN BRAZZAVILLE MAYOR'S OFFICE AND SPENT FAIR AMOUNT OF TIME PAN-HANDLING IN WESTERN EMBASSIES (NOT OURS). MOUZABAKANI WAS A POLITICAL OPPONENT OF NGOUABI. FISHING MERCHANT FINA, WITH HIS FLEETS OF TRUCKS AND MERCEDES, OFFICES IN ZAIRE, AND HIS YOUNGER BROTHER'S OPERATION OF A STRING OF CALL GIRLS, WAS LESS THAN AN OBJECT OF ADMIRATION FOR WHAT IS THE OFTEN HYPOCRITICAL PURITANISM OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE. ADDITIONALLY, WE UNDERSTAND THAT FINA, WHO ATTENDED SCHOOL IN BRAZZAVILLE WITH OBNNGA, HAS BEEN A LONG TIME RIVAL OF HIS.

3. EMBELLISHMENTS SUCH AS THREAT OF FOREIGN MERCENAIRES, MILITARY AIRCRAFT, ETC. MAY HAVE BEEN INVENTIONS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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FINA OR OF YHOMBY. EKONDY THREW IN "MENANCE OF LOCAL LEBANESE" IN MEETING WITH CHARGE AUGUST 14: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE. CERTAINLY NONE OF THESE ALLEGATIONS, NOR COMPLICITY OF "SEVERAL WESTERN AND AFRICAN CAPITALS" HAS BEEN LOCALIZED, OR PROVEN. NOR ARE THEY LIKELY TO BE. AND WE SEE LITTLE POSSIBILITY AS OF OW--PERHAPS FOR THAT VERY REASON THAT CONGO WILL GO, AS BENIN, TO UNSC TO SEEK PUBLICITY AND ALMS.

4. YHOMBY'S REACTION HAS BEEN DRAMATIC AND FORCEFUL. ALL NATIONAL DAY EVENTS WERE CANCELLED. HIS AUGUST 14 SPEECH IS BEING RERUN REPEATEDLY ON RADIO (TEXT POUCHED DEPARTMENT AF/C-KATES). A 9 P.M.-5 A.M. CURFEW IS ON, AND SECURITY DURING THOSE HOURS IS VERY TIGHT. YHOMBY SPENT A FITFUL NIGHT AUGUST 14, SEVERAL SOURCES CONFIRMING THAT HE WAS CONCERNED IN THE EXTREME THAT THE PLOT WAS LARGER AND STILL THREATENED THE SECURITY OF HIS REGIME (SEE SEPTTEL). AUGUST 15 SAW A FLY-BY OF CONGOLESE MIGS, "ON PATROL." AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, FERRIES CONTINUE TO RUN TO AND FROM KINSHASA AND, AS OF 11:00 A.M. LOCAL AUGUST 16, BRAZZAVILLE IS BACK TO ITS REGULAR NON-FRENETIC PACE OF LIFE.

5. YHOMBY IS USING OCCASION TO MOBILIZE POPULATION AGAIN AGAINST "FORCES OF REACTION" IN AN APPARENT EFFORT INTER ALIA, TO INCREASE HIS OWN POPULARITY. HE HAS EMPHASIZED THE POINT THAT NGOUABI HAD PARDONED MOUZABAKANI, KOLELA, AND MIKASSISSA FOR THEIR "CRIMES" AGAINST STATE, INDICATING THAT HE, YHOMBY, WOULD OFFER NO SUCH MERCY-- THEREBY TAKING STRIKE TO SHOW HIMSELF AS TOUGHER THAN HIS PREDECESSOR IN SUCH MATTERS. AT SAME TIME, THREAT TO STATE AND ATTENDANT REQUISITE SECURITY MEASURES CAN BE USED BY GOCB AS ANOTHER EXCUSE FOR INEFFICIENCY IN MEETING PLAN TARGETS AND UPCOMING PAYROLL DEADLINES.

6. EQUALLY IMPORTANT, ARRESTS WILL BE USED TO INTIMIDATE  
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FURTHER LARIS AND OTHER SOUTHERNERS, WHOSE GROWING WAS ON THE INCREASE. PREDICTABLY, SOUTHERNERS IN BRAZZAVILLE BELIEVE WHOLE STORY WAS MADE UP FOR PURPOSE OF PERSECUTING INNOCENT OPPOSITION. THEY POINT TO FACT THAT THUS FAR ONLY TWO OF BRAZZAVILLE'S ARRONDISSEMENTS HAVE SENT TELEGRAMS SUPPORTING YHOMBY. WHETHER LARIS ARE CONVINCED OR NOT, NORTHERNERS ARE UNITED IN BELIEF THEY HAVE SCOTCHED ANOTHER SOUTHERN CABAL. AND THEY MAY HAVE. OTHER OPPONENTS--GUILTY AND INNOCENT--ARE LIKELY TO BE DRAWN INTO THE ACCUSATIONS. THIS, IN TURN, MAY BE ENOUGH TO OFFER YHOMBY A PRETEXT TO MAKE GOVERNMENTAL CHANGES TO REINFORCE HIS OWN HAND. EKONDY TOLD US AUGUST 14 THAT HE WAS BEING ACCUSED BY SOUTHERNS OF MOUNTING, ALONG WITH OBENGA AND YHOMBY, A "PRE-EMPTIVE COUP" WITH THAT AS ITS VERY OBJECTIVE.

7. WE STILL HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OF OUR OWN, YET THEY MAY WELL NEVER BE ANSWERED. THERE INDEED DOES SEEM TO HAVE BEEN A PLOT. FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO INVENT ONE AT THIS TIME SOUNDS UNNECESSARY, SINCE PAYROLLS HAVE BEEN MET THROUGH THE END OF AUGUST, AND NEXT PAYMENTS COULD BE DELAYED, CONCEIVABLY THROUGH OCTOBER, WITHOUT PROVOKING WIDE-SCALE WRATH. BUT, STIRRING UP THE PEOPLE AND MOBILIZING THEM THROUGH BROADER ALLEGATIONS OF INTERNAL REACTION AND EXTERNAL IMPERIALISM ARE NOTHING NEW TO AFRICA NOR, FOR THAT MATTER, THE REST OF THE WORLD. KATZEN UNQTE  
VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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